

## **Congressman Childers Participates in Unveiling of Recovery-Funded Energy-Efficient Buses for Columbus School District**

December 7, 2009

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman Travis Childers (MS-01) joined Columbus School District in unveiling upgraded, fuel-efficient school buses that were made available by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Congressman was joined by School District Superintendent Dr. Del R. Phillips, Trudy Fisher from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Mike Waters of Waters Transportation Services, and John McKinney of IC Bus.

“Columbus School District’s energy-efficient buses will create a cleaner environment for our children and communities. The Recovery Act funds that went towards making these upgrades represent an important investment in public and environmental health, student safety, and economic development. It’s essential that North Mississippi schools have the up-to-date equipment they need to safely serve our students and our communities. In addition, this project provided much-needed work for local businesses. I thank both Waters Transportation Services and IC Bus for continuing to create and save jobs and promote economic development in our state,” said Congressman Childers.

“The DERA grant has allowed our school district to upgrade a large portion of our school bus fleet to correct emission standards. The new model buses will reduce the carbon footprint we emit locally each day as we transport students in our city. It’s truly a win-win situation for our community and school district,” said Superintendent Dr. Del R. Phillips.

“The Columbus School District is a leader in the state in seeking out grants to protect the health of their children and we were proud to be a part of the grant process. The new fleet of buses in Columbus includes the most technologically advanced and cleanest buses available. School buses are the safest and most efficient way to transport students, but we want to ensure that it’s a healthy trip,” said MDEQ Executive Director Trudy Fisher.

“The depressed economy has created a significant slow down in the truck, bus, and equipment business. Columbus School District’s order for these buses has helped keep Waters employees busy and at work, and I thank the district for the business. These new buses will reduce the diesel exhaust emissions as compared to the older buses they replace. This cleaner air will provide a positive impact on the health of our children and all the citizens of Columbus, Mississippi. We will all benefit from this grant,” said Mike Waters, President of Waters Truck and Tractor Co., Inc.

“The diesel engines in these school buses are among the cleanest diesel engines ever built and are compliant with the upcoming EPA diesel emissions requirements scheduled to go into effect beginning January, 1, 2010. Our IC Bus school buses provide school districts with the smarter, easier and cleaner option for meeting 2010 EPA emissions requirements because our MaxxForce Advanced EGR engines places the responsibility of emissions compliance on us, the manufacturer, not the customer,” said John McKinney, President of IC Bus.

In July, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded \$1,445,851 million to Columbus Municipal School District for replacing and upgrading old school buses. The funds, provided under the Recovery Act’s National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program, will ultimately help protect the environment and improve air quality while promoting economic development in North Mississippi.

Specifically, the award funded the replacement of 30 old Columbus school buses with new buses and the installation of direct fire heating units (which prevent cold starts and increase useful life) in 22 other buses. The result will be an estimated vehicle lifetime emissions reduction of 61.43 tons of nitrogen oxides, 1.19 tons of particulate matter, 2.91 tons of CO, and 246.12 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

For more information on the First District’s and Mississippi’s share of Recovery Act funds, visit Congressman Childers’ online Recovery Tracker at [www.childers.house.gov](http://www.childers.house.gov).

*A pro-gun, pro-life Mississippian, Congressman Travis Childers (D-MS) represents the First Congressional District in North Mississippi. He is a member of the fiscally conservative Blue*

*Dog Coalition and serves on the House Agriculture and Financial Services Committee. Congressman Childers co-chairs the reestablished bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus and was appointed to the bipartisan Second Amendment Task Force. For more information, visit [w  
www.childers.house.gov](http://www.childers.house.gov)*

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